

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/025,803

Examiner

Gary C. Vieaux

Applicant(s)

OJIMA, NORIAKI

Art Unit

2612

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 12/26/2001.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-17.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
(a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
(b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date <u>20060314</u> . |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date <u>(included)</u> | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT AND STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes
5 and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided
by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be
submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview
with James Kulbaski, (Atty. Reg. No. 34,648) on March 16, 2006.

10

Amendment In the Specification

The title is amended to read "**AUTOMATIC FOCUS CONTROL BASED ON
VOLTAGE, TEMPERATURE, AND POWER SUPPLY**", which represents a title that is
more clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

15

The misspelled term "adopter" on line 22 of page 2 of the specification is
amended to correctly spell the term "adapter".

Amendment In the Claims

20 **Claim 1.** (Currently amended) A digital camera, which has a control unit which regularly
carries out an automatic focusing operation without a release button on an operation
section being pressed, comprising:

a voltage detection unit which drives detects a voltage of a power supply;

a temperature detection unit which detects an inner temperature and an outer temperature of the apparatus digital camera;

5 a power supply detection unit which detects whether the power supply is an AC power supply or a DC power supply;

a power-supply condition control unit which makes a determination as to a power-supply state of the apparatus digital camera based upon a voltage, a temperature and the kind of the power supply that have been respectively detected by the voltage detection unit, the temperature detection unit, and the power supply
10 detection unit; and

a focusing unit which automatically focuses a focus lens system onto a subject, wherein the gap of automatic focusing timing is varied by an output from the power-supply condition control unit.

15 **Claim 3.** (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 2, wherein the power supply condition control unit ~~allows the user to select the~~ grants permission and inhibition of the function for varying the gap of automatic focusing timing based upon the detected voltage in accordance with user input.

20 **Claim 6.** (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 5, wherein the power supply condition control unit ~~allows the user to select the~~ grants permission and

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inhibition of the function for varying the gap of automatic focusing timing based upon the detected outer temperature in accordance with user input.

Claim 7. (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 1, wherein further

5 comprising an input device configured to allow a user ~~is allowed~~ to set the rate of variation in the gap of automatic focusing timing.

Claim 11. (Currently amended) A digital camera comprising:

a voltage detection unit which drives detects a voltage of a power supply;

10 a temperature detection unit which detects an inner temperature and an outer temperature of the ~~apparatus~~ digital camera;

a power supply detection unit which detects whether the power supply is an AC power supply or a DC power supply;

15 a power-supply condition control unit which makes a determination as to a power-supply state of the ~~apparatus~~ digital camera based upon a voltage, a temperature and the kind of the power supply that have been respectively detected by the voltage detection unit, the temperature detection unit, and the power supply detection unit;

a focusing unit which automatically focuses a focus lens system onto a subject;

20 and

a focusing position detection unit which, when a release button is pressed, is allowed to acquire an evaluation value in synchronism with a VD signal (vertical synchronous signal) to detect a focusing position,

wherein the focal position detection unit acquires the evaluation value by varying
5 the gap of VD signals based upon the output of the power-supply condition control unit.

Claim 13. (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 12, wherein the power supply condition control unit ~~allows the user to select the~~ grants permission and inhibition of the function for acquiring the evaluation value by varying the gap of VD
10 signals based upon the detected voltage in accordance with user input.

Claim 16. (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 15, wherein the power supply condition control unit ~~allows the user to select the~~ grants permission and inhibition of the function for varying the gap of VD signals based upon the detected
15 outer temperature in accordance with user input.

Claim 17. (Currently amended) The digital camera according to claim 11, ~~wherein~~ further comprising an input device configured to allow a user ~~is allowed~~ to set the rate of variation in said gap of VD signals.

EXAMINER'S STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Priority

Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy of Japanese patent application number 2000-398876, filed on December 27, 2000, has been received and made of record.

Additionally, the Examiner notes that the inventor name associated with the priority document in both the United States and Japanese records, Kensho Oshima, is a translational equivalent to Noriaki Ojima, the inventor of record in the instant application.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statements (IDS) submitted on the following dates are in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97 and are being considered by the Examiner:

December 26, 2001,	April 4, 2003,	April 25, 2003,
September 3, 2003,	April 22, 2004,	and November 1, 2004.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-17 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Regarding independent claims 1 and 11, the prior art is not found to teach or fairly suggest, the combination of existing elements of the present claim comprising a voltage detection unit which drives power supply, a temperature detection unit which

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detects an inner temperature and an outer temperature of the apparatus, a power supply detection unit which detects whether the power supply is an AC power supply or a DC power supply, a power-supply condition control unit which makes a determination as to a power-supply state of the apparatus based upon a voltage, a temperature and the kind of the power supply that have been respectively detected by the voltage detection unit, the temperature detection unit, and the power supply detection unit, and a focusing unit which automatically focuses a focus lens system onto a subject, wherein the gap of automatic focusing timing is varied by an output from the power-supply condition control unit.

Regarding claims 2-10 and 12-17, each claim depends either directly or indirectly from an independent claim containing allowable subject matter. Therefore, based on this dependence, claims 2-10 and 12-17 are also allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Iwane et al. (US 5,614,983) discloses taking temperature and power source voltage into account during automatic focusing operations.

Kijima et al. (US 6,812,965) discloses adjusting camera operation based on ambient temperature and power supply voltage levels.

Yoshida et al. (US 026,246) discloses accounting for temperature and power supply variations when determining camera distances.

5 Shinbori et al. (US 5,831,945) discloses discrimination between power sources.

Contact

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gary C. Vieaux whose telephone number is 571-272-
10 7318. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 4:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, NgocYen T. Vu can be reached on 571-272-7320. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the
15 Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic
20 Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


NGOC-YEN VU
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Gary C. Vieaux
Examiner
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